BURNLEY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2025

Lecture Programme for 2025/6 Season is as follows:-

September 10th
From Battleground to Underground: a Lancashire Architect.
by Denise North

October 8th
The Book of St. Peter.
by Annette Roadley

November 12th
Railway Development in Lancashire.
by Dr. Paul Salveson

December 10th
A.G.M.

January 14th
A Variety of Films About Burnley – Walter Bennett Memorial Lecture.
by Mike Smith

February 11th
A Visual of Burnley: Then and Now.
by Edward Walton

March 11th
Pockets of Pacifism in East Lancashire. Local Peace Campaigners During the Two World Wars.
by Steven Illingworth

April 8th
Trials of the Lancashire Witches.
By Dr. Graham Kemp

Some members attending lectures have reported having difficulties in hearing the speakers. We have now purchased a clip-on microphone which will be made available to speakers at future lectures.

LORD O'HAGAN

It was announced earlier this year that Lord Charles Towneley Strachey O'Hagan, a vice-chairman of our Society for many years, had died at his home in Barnstaple at the age of 79. He was a godson of the late Queen Elizabeth 11 and served as a member of the European Parliament for Devon 1973-75 and again from 1979-1994. Educated at Eton College and Oxford University. He served as a page of honour to Queen Elizabeth 11 from 1959-62**.**

BURNLEY FOOTBALL CLUB

On Easter Monday, 21st April, Burnley Football Club gained promotion to the Premier League with two games left to play. At the end of the season Burnley was in second position in the Championship equal on 100 points with Leeds United after a season which had seen only two matches lost and sixteen goals conceded after forty-four games. It had been a most successful season!

On Tuesday 6th May after a ceremony at the Town Hall, two open-top coaches, suitably adorned, set off in a parade through the town centre to Turf Moor. It was a fine evening, which made for a memorable event witnessed by thousands of supporters and their families. The event was well organised and tactfully marshalled as the coaches made their way to Turf Moor. The crowds were boisterous yet orderly making it very much an occasion to remember.

Incredibly driving along Yorkshire Street the following morning there was no evidence in the way of litter and all was pristine thanks to the efforts of Burnley Council.

TOWNELEY HALL

Towneley Hall opened in July after completion of an extensive repair and restoration programme. A visit for the Society has been arranged when Tony Mitchell will give a conducted tour of the outside of the hall describing the various architectural details. This will take place on the afternoon of Wednesday the 24th. of September. To obtain further information and to book a place contact Stephen Child at martinchild66@yahoo.co.uk or telephone 01254491295 before September 11th.

WEAVERS' TRIANGLE VISITOR CENTRE

The Visitor Centre is now open 1pm.- 4p.m. until September, on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays. Together with the usual attractions there is a new exhibition on the Manor House at Ightenhill. There will be two guided towpath walks from the Visitor Centre, details for which can be obtained from the Visitor Centre

TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS

Burnley Town Council has enhanced recent alterations by decommissioning the subway, filling it in and paving the nearby area planting appropriate floral displays and trees which have enhanced the site enormously. Throughout the town the numerous wildflower beds are also very attractive.

What subway!

VISIT OF THE DUKE OF LANCASTER'S REGIMENT

On Tuesday 8th.July 2025, the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment paraded through Burnley to mark their Freedom of the Borough, which was granted in 2013. This provided the opportunity for the public to show appreciation for the Regiment's service at home and abroad. Led by a military band, mounted police, and soldiers in ceremonial dress, the march was from St. Peter's Church to Burnley Football Club where the Regiment was inspected by the Mayor, the Deputy Lieutenant of Lancashire and the Leader of the Council before an audience of other civic leaders and veterans.

The children from St Peter's School will have something to remember!

KELP

In Volunteers' Week 2025, the project Keeping East Lancashire in the Picture was announced as the winner of the National Archives and Records Association Archive Volunteers' Award. This is an annual award given to projects that demonstrate how usage of archives has supported volunteers in the previous 12 months. The award was presented by the President of the Archives and Records Association at Preston Archives and a number of volunteers attended.

Before the KELP project finishes in September there are exhibitions of the work done by the volunteers in four local libraries. The dates of opening are:-

Burnley Central Library 9/8/2025 - 5/9/2025 at 1p.m.
Accrington Library 2/8/2025 to 29/8/2025 at 1p.m.
Nelson Library 16/8/2025 to 12/9/2025 at 1p.m.
Colne Library 23/8/2025 to 19/9/2025 at 1p.m.

The KELP project is also funding free workshops in Burnley Library these include: -

*Stop-Go Animation workshop for children 8+.
*Dating Historical photographs.
*Introduction to photographic composition workshop (applicable to camera phones).
*Acrylic painting workshop for adults with award winning local artist Gosha Gibek.
*Children 8+ stitching, collage, and painting with local artist Gosha Gibek.
*Cyanotyping and photo montage workshop for children.
*Cyanotyping and photo montage workshop for adults.

Booking is required for these events, visit Lancashire County Council Events for times and booking.

REQUESTS TO THE SOCIETY FOR INFORMATION

Following on from the last newsletter we again include these topics hoping anyone can assist:

POCAHONTAS

Following the article by Ramon Collinge which appeared in Retrospect about Pocahontas, Ramon has been contacted by St. John's Church at Holme requesting further information with regard to the Cliviger cleric Rev. Alexander Whitaker who it is said baptised Pocahontas. Ramon has agreed to help and would welcome help from anyone with any articles and sketches about the man.

WW1 SOLDIER WILLIAM SINGLETON

A query via the web site from someone researching William Singleton, who was a soldier from Burnley, was answered with information supplied by Mike Townend and Denise North. William's father James William Edward was also serving when he was wounded in 1915 and came back to Burnley to recover from his wounds. He claimed that his life had been saved by his gift from Princes Mary, a tin containing Christmas gifts, which every serving soldier received in 1914. He donated the tin to St Mary's convent. We have so far been unable to provide details of this and would appreciate any help.

TOM ROBINSON AND TOM NICHOL, (LATER EDWARD NICHOL)

Professor Alison Wray is researching these two Burnley musicians and has information from census records and civil registration but is looking for any further information with regard to Robinson's training, how and what he taught, also what he did in WW1.

BELGIAN REFUGEES WORLD WAR ONE

The "In Flanders Fields Museum" in Ypres is putting together an exhibition about Belgian refugees who fled to Britain after the start of World War One and have requested help from local historians in providing information from their areas. I have previously researched this subject and have been able to submit articles, newspaper cuttings and photographs about this area for the exhibition. If anyone has further information regarding the Belgian Club, which was established in Burnley at that time, or about whether any of the refugees did not return to Belgium after the war it would be appreciated.

IGHTENHILL PARK FESTIVAL

This event organised by The Friends of Ightenhill Park takes place on Sunday 24th August 2025 from about 12 noon. Edward Walton has re-edited Jack Nadin's Old Ightenhill book and has added many photographs. The new book will be available for sale at the event.

SUMMER VISIT

On Monday June 23rd. members of the society enjoyed a summer visit to the home and gardens of Lavinia Tod in Ramsbottom. The garden is enhanced by views of the West Pennine Moors and has water features, stone dragons, and a terracotta warrior in the Oriental section. The teahouse includes a miniature railway and the Italian Garden has a fishpond and covered pergola. The garden opens onto the churchyard where there are information boards about the history of the area. Tea and cake was served indoors after which Lavinia gave a talk on the history of the Open Gardens Scheme proceeds from which benefit local charities.

HERITAGE WEEK

Heritage week 2025 is from September 12th. To September 21st. A programme of events will be published shortly and will be available from the usual locations.

PUBLICATIONS

Retrospect Index: Molly Haines has produced a follow on index to be combined with the original index as a single document. 100 copies have been ordered and should be available for sale at the September meeting.

RETROSPECT

Anyone intending to submit articles for ***Retrospect*** should contact the editor Denise North for advice on length of article and protocol. Several articles are already in preparation and submissions should be forwarded before the end of August.

Denise North.